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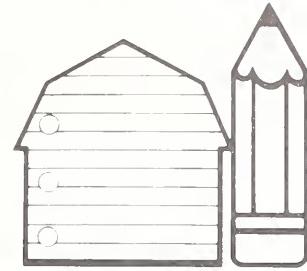
Agriculture in the Classroom

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Notes

A bi-monthly newsletter for the Agriculture in the Classroom Program. Sponsored by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture to help students understand the important role of agriculture in the United States economy. For information, contact: Shirley Traxler, Director, Room 317-A, Administration Bldg., USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-2200. 202/447-5727

United States
Department of
Agriculture



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Teachers Spend the Summer as ARS Scientists

"So much of teaching is interdisciplinary. Teachers need to learn as much as they can so they can bring that knowledge to their students," says Willie Karidis, a teacher from Fairbanks, Alaska, who spent the summer as a teacher fellow working in an Agricultural Research Service (ARS) lab.

Karidis was one of seven teachers who took part in this year's summer teacher fellowship program in the ARS Pacific West area, which includes 25 research locations in eight western states. The goal was to better communicate the importance of agricultural research to science teachers. "And through the teachers, we hope to develop a direct relationship between ARS and their promising science students," says Betsy

Ferguson, Equal Employment Opportunity manager for ARS' Pacific West Area.

"We've known that people do not always associate agriculture with science. Even Agriculture Science, the ARS publication, goes only to ag teachers, not to science teachers."

Scientists at ARS research locations were invited to develop proposals involving science teachers. Research topics included fruit flies, germination of Medusahead grass, and soil nutrient cycling. The ARS scientists served as mentors for the teachers.

For many of the teachers, it was their first exposure to professional scientific research. "My

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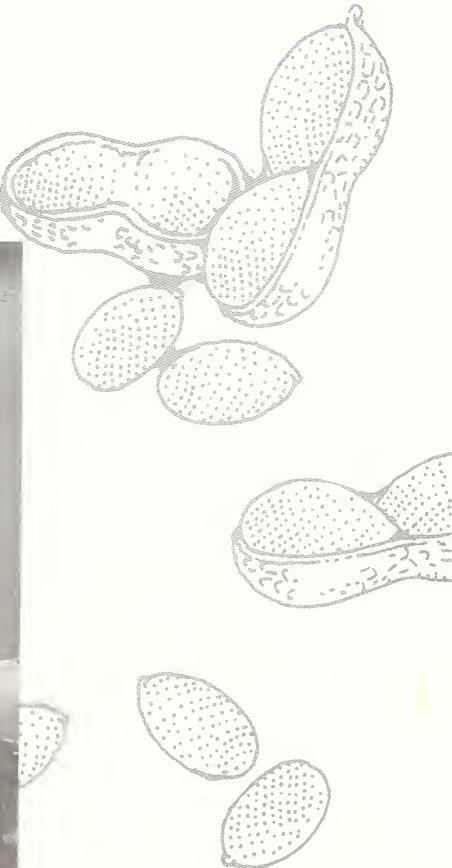
Carver's Papers Go On-Line at Agricultural Library

Nearly 50 years after his death, researcher George Washington Carver remains in the vanguard of agricultural science. USDA's National Agricultural Library (NAL) has selected a collection of his papers for an experiment in electronic information distribution.

NAL will use a microfilm collection of Carver's written materials from Tuskegee University to test the feasibility of converting microfilm to electronic page images that can be accessed by microcomputer.

NAL will optically scan Carver's papers, convert them to electronic images, and then make them available on high-capacity, laser-readable discs

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From the Editor:

Following are some announcements:

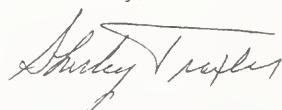
The U.S. Department of Agriculture is gradually switching to another telephone system. Ag in the Classroom's new telephone number is: 202/720-5727. Please begin using this number on October 25, 1991.

June 6-9 is the date for our 1992 Ag in the Classroom National Conference. Many of you indicated through this year's conference evaluations that you would like to see the conference move around the country from time to time. Therefore, we have selected Orlando, Florida as our 1992 site and will include The Land exhibit at Epcot Center as part of our conference agenda.

Mark your calendars and look for more information in upcoming issues of "Notes."

Dr. Charles E. Hess, whose strong support of Ag in the Classroom we have enjoyed for the past two years, is leaving his post as Assistant Secretary for Science and Education at the United States Department of Agriculture to return to the University of California at Davis. Our thanks and best wishes for continued success go with him.

Yours Truly,



Shirley Traxler

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Teachers Spend the Summer as ARS Scientists

biggest surprise was the amount of sampling that needs to be done to have accurate research," Karidis says. The soil nutrient project he worked on with mentor scientist Elena Sparrow involved over 2500 soil samples. Another teacher told Ferguson his biggest surprise was discovering how

approachable the ARS scientists were. "I didn't see a single white coat all summer," he reported.

At the conclusion of their summer as scientists, the teacher fellows took part in a two-day workshop. In addition to sharing their experiences with each other, the teacher fellows also learned about many of the science education resources available in the San Francisco Bay area. Tours included the Exploratorium, the Lawrence Hall of Science, and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

But for many of the teachers, the most valuable resource proved to be ARS itself. "Teaching is part of dealing with a community," says Charles Nuccio, a high school science teacher who worked at the Renewable Resource Center in Reno, Nevada. "If I had students working on a project, I could show them that the same type of research is being done right down the street from them. I could visit the lab for field trips. And I know that if I needed help, I could just come down here."

Dr. Greg Glenn explains his wheat milling research to teachers at an ARS workshop, Albany, California



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Carver's Papers Go On-Line at Agricultural Library

known as CD-ROM's. In this format, the material can be used by agricultural and research libraries worldwide.

According to project coordinator Judi Zidar, the material chosen for this experiment must be informative, visually interesting, and form a cohesive subject collection that is valuable in its own right. "The Tuskegee University microfilm collection of the papers and letters of George Washington Carver more than fulfilled these criteria," Zidar said. "He is a major historical figure in agriculture who devoted himself to practical, hands-on agricultural research and education. The Tuskegee collection captures much of Carver's personality."

Carver, who devoted his life to agricultural research, revolutionized agriculture for many small Southern farmers. By developing products from such crops as peanuts, sweet potatoes, and pecans, he provided new sources of income for farmers who had previously grown only cotton.

The Carver project is part of NAL's National Agricultural Text Digitizing Project (NATDP), an ongoing investigation into using optical scanning techniques to preserve and disseminate the nation's priceless agricultural knowledge. The Carver CD-ROM is expected to be available for use by agricultural and research libraries in December.

Spotlight

Alaska Teacher Turns Ag Researcher

Last spring, Willie Karidis was working with the education department at University of Alaska-Fairbanks to design a continuing education course for teachers. While doing the research, he learned about the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) summer teacher fellowship program — and ended up in a continuing education program of his own.

Karidis, who serves as a substitute teacher in the Fairbanks system, has a degree in agricultural economics. But the summer he spent in the ARS Fairbanks lab was his introduction to agricultural research. "It was great to help set up the project and to really see what is necessary for research to be carried out," he said. The precision and the labor-intensive nature of Sparrow's research were also eye-openers for Karidis. "I was fortunate to be exposed to all the mechanics of research — I have gained an understanding of how research is conducted."

The soil nutrient project he worked on with mentor scientist Elena Sparrow is nearing completion. "Then our job will be to translate all of this research, making it easy for kids to understand it and be excited about it." That, Karidis suggests,

should be done in a school system, "because that's really where the end result will come."

Karidis believes he can easily bring what he learned over the summer into the classroom. He plans to include it whenever he is "talking to kids about where our food comes from and what research is all about ... what the whole industry is all about."

Karidis also plans to link the study of agriculture with other subjects that are important to his students, including energy conservation and the need for preserving the environment. "They're all tied together. Students who begin studying one of these subjects can easily move into any of the others," he says.

Continuing education is vitally important for teachers, Karidis says. "The great strength of teachers is their ability to integrate new information with what they have already learned ... and to make that information come alive for their students," he says. "I know that everything I've learned this summer will, in one way or another, enrich my lessons for students for years to come."



"The great strength of teachers is their ability to integrate new information with what they have already learned ... and to make that information come alive for their students,"....



Willie Karidis (left) receiving a certificate and congratulations from Dr. Ray Clark, Acting Associate Director, Pacific West Area, ARS.

Ag in the Classroom and the National Education Goals

A nation at risk must become a nation of students....

One of the most thought-provoking presentations at this year's National Conference focused on the National Education Goals and America 2000, the strategy proposed by the President to help our nation reach these ambitious goals. Following are excerpts from a discussion by Mary Witten Neal, U.S. Department of Education, on this critical educational issue.

America 2000 is a long-term strategy to help make this land all that it should be, in a nine-year crusade to move us toward the six ambitious National Education Goals that the President and Governors adopted in 1990. The strategy anticipates major change in our 110,000 public and private schools — change in every community, change in every American home, change in our attitude about learning.

America 2000 is a national strategy, not a Federal program. This is very important. As you know, only six percent of the entire education budget comes from the Federal government. The role of education remains primarily with the communities and with the localities . . . It recognizes that real education reform happens community by community and school by school.

Mary Witten Neal speaking
at National Conference.



....America's adults must demonstrate that learning is lifelong by going back to school to gain new skills for work or additional knowledge for life.

America 2000 has four parts that will be pursued simultaneously. The first track is for today's students. We must radically improve today's schools . . . Specific elements of this track include the new world standards, which require the highest academic standards anywhere in the world in the five core subjects of mathematics, science, English, history, and geography. . . .

The second track is for tomorrow's students. We must invent new schools to meet the demands of a new century. [America 2000 will bring] at least 535 of these new schools into existence by 1996, and 1000 by the decade's end. . . . The exciting thing here is that you have the opportunity to develop a plan in your area which will bring the importance of agriculture to the forefront. There is nothing to say that you couldn't develop a whole school that is focused on what makes the community and the geographical area prosper. . . .

Every Congressional District will have a school, every Senator will have a school. . . . The schools will actually be chosen . . . first by the Governor's recommendation, then come to the Secretary of Education, where a panel here in Washington will determine the . . . America 2000 schools. The schools will be given a million dollars, which may not be used for construction costs or for the facilities, but rather for developing the curriculum and training the staff. . . .

The third track is . . . for the rest of us, yesterday's students and today's workforce. We must keep learning if we are to live and work successfully in today's world. A nation at risk must become a nation of students. . . . America's adults must demonstrate that learning is lifelong by going back to school to gain new skills for work or additional knowledge for life.

The fourth track is on communities. For schools to succeed, we must look beyond the classrooms to our communities and families. Ninety-one percent of a child's life is spent outside school. So parents, families, neighbors, and other adults must build relationships to nurture children.

Ag in the Classroom Tenth Anniversary Conference

Ag in the Classroom Tenth Anniversary Conference

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Oregon Teacher, Students Are Award Winners

When Bill Holloway entered Daphne Rice's fourth/fifth grade combination class at Milwaukie Elementary School near Portland, Oregon, he knew how to cook just three things: toast, boiled eggs, and cold cereal. But, like most ten-year-olds, he knew how to eat "absolutely anything."

To introduce her students to the diversity of Oregon agriculture, Rice asked them to find recipes reflecting the state's major agricultural products. Rice asked her students to write to adults involved in agriculture in each of the state's 36 counties. They contacted extension agents, chambers of commerce, school cooks, and agricultural organizations. "They requested recipes using the major agricultural products from that region," Rice says. "Cultural influences were also taken into consideration."

Once the recipes were received, the selection process began. Sarah McKenzie, for example, said, "I just picked some of the very weird ones that had strange names." Her contributions included Chocolate Covered Potato Candy.

Lisa Thomas took a more poetic approach. Her contributions included Ocean Fish a la Snow, Fir Tip Jelly, and Deep, Dark Delicious Salad.

Stephanie Taylor choose a Never Fail Pie Crust "because my mom always makes pie crusts and then she always messes them up." Bill Holloway tried Seafood Casserole Salad from Clatsop County at home before adding it to the cookbook.

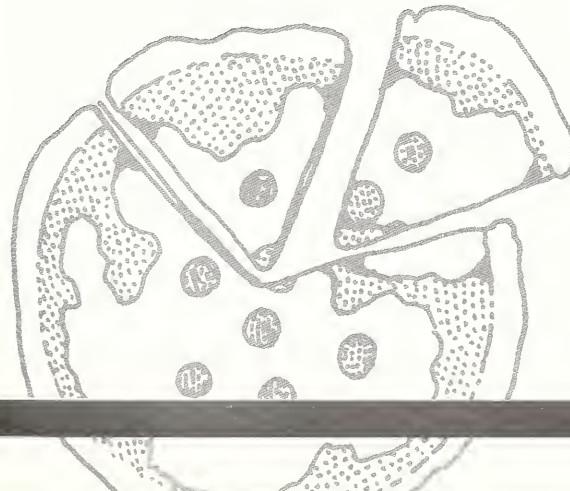
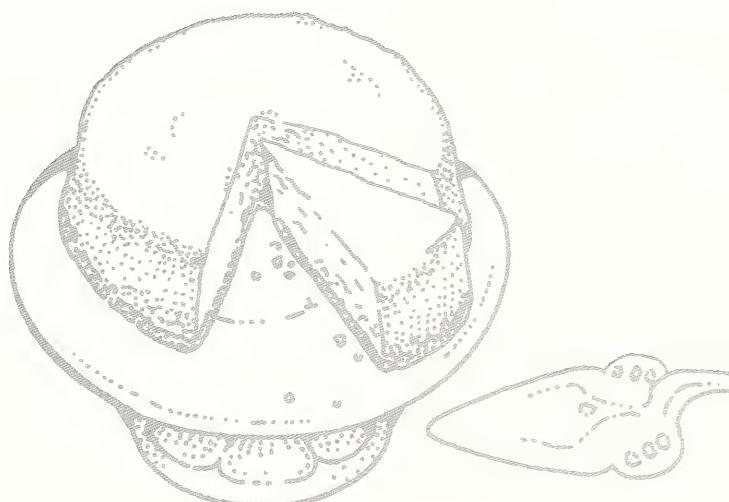
The recipes were compiled into the Oregon County Cookbook, which the students presented to their parents. Rice entered the cookbook in the Tabasco Community Cookbook Awards National Competition. Of the 158 entries nationwide, the book was one of 12 to receive special recognition. "We were really surprised to hear we won. They were competing with museum guild cookbooks," Rice said.

The cookbook project also proved to be a winner in meeting learning objectives. Rice says her students learned about social studies, writing skills, art, and keyboarding.

OREGON COUNTY COOKBOOK

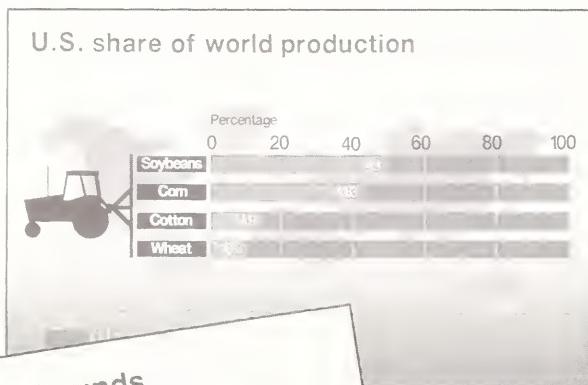


**MRS. RICE'S
FOURTH GRADE
1989-90**

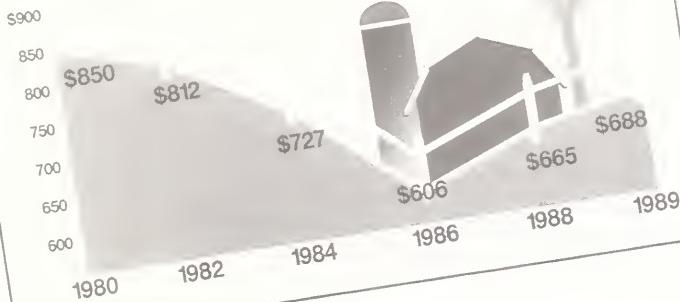


Farm Facts Highlights Important Information About Agriculture

Want to show students how much less Americans spend on food than do citizens of other developed countries? Looking for a graphic way to depict the efficiency and productivity of American farmers? Or are you simply browsing for interesting facts to spark a discussion on agriculture?



U.S. farm real estate rebounds



Ag products we buy abroad

Most of the \$22.7 billion in U.S. ag imports comes from commodities not produced in the U.S.



All that information — and more — is included in **Farm Facts**, a new publication by the American Farm Bureau Federation. The booklet includes the facts and figures that can help provide an understanding of modern-day agriculture. The information is presented in colorful charts and graphs that make it easy to absorb ... and remember. "Farm Facts is one way to tell the great American success story and a little bit about the folks who make it happen," says Marcia Purcell, director of program development for the Farm Bureau.

Farm Facts includes information on today's farm, agricultural production, trade, economics, farming and the American consumer, and significant events. A glossary explains important agricultural terms.

The cover of the publication features a still-life by internationally-known crop artist Stan Herd. Signed, numbered prints of the work, called "The Harvest," are available from the Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation. Proceeds will benefit Nebraska's Ag in the Classroom program.

Copies of *Farm Facts* are available as follows:

- 1 - 9 copies, \$3.00 each.
- 10 - 200 copies, \$2.75 each.
- More than 200 copies, \$2.50 each.

Contact the Information Division, American Farm Bureau Federation, 225 Touhy Avenue, Park Ridge, IL 60068, (312) 399-5858. To order the print, contact Cheryl Stubbendieck at the Nebraska Farm Bureau Federation, (402) 421-4405.

Volunteers Have Rights and Responsibilities

Ag in the Classroom programs depend on the active involvement of volunteers. To keep volunteer interest and enthusiasm high, any program needs to understand the rights, responsibilities, and rewards that volunteers can expect.

Rights

A volunteer has the following rights:

- to be treated as equals with all other workers
- to be given a suitable assignment
- to know as much about the organization as possible
- to receive training for the job
- to receive continuing education for the job
- to be given sound guidance and direction
- to be given a variety of experience
- to be heard
- to be recognized
- to have time for home and family

Responsibilities

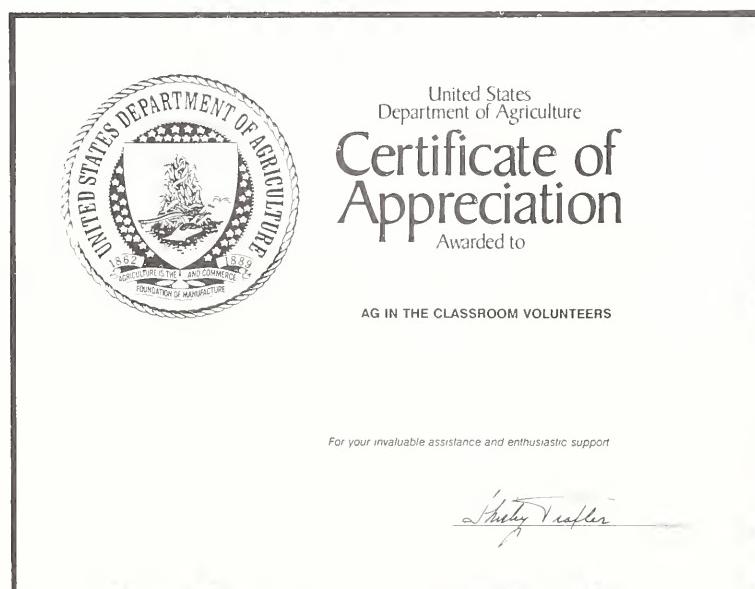
A volunteer has the following responsibilities:

- to be sincere in the offer of service and believe in the value of the job to be done
- to be loyal to the organization
- to carry out duties promptly and responsibly
- to accept the guidance and decisions of the program coordinators
- to be willing to learn and participate in orientation, training programs, meetings
- to continue learning on the job

Rewards

A volunteer should expect the following rewards:

- to get satisfaction from a job well done
- to receive recognition, both public and personal
- to learn new tasks, receive special training, and experience personal growth
- to meet new people, have some fun, and laugh a little
- to gain increased respect from family and friends
- to know you make a difference



The National Education Goals

GOAL 1: Readiness for School. By the year 2000, all children in America will start school ready to learn.

GOAL 2: High School Completion. By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

GOAL 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship. By the year 2000, American students will leave grades four, eight, and twelve having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, history, and geography; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy.

GOAL 4: Science and Mathematics. By the year 2000, U.S. students will be first in the world in science and mathematics achievement.

GOAL 5: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning. By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

GOAL 6: Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools. By the year 2000, every school in America will be free of drugs and violence and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

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The individuals listed here are key reference persons in each state. If you have any questions, want to make reports, or need more information about your state's Ag in the Classroom program, contact the following:

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Ag in the Classroom Notes

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